



Qilak

Text: Inuktitut

Andrew Balfour
Inspired by travels in Baffin Island
editor: Catherine Robbins

$\text{♩} = 72$

mp

S. Qi - - - There is the sky. There is the sky.

mp *mf*

A. Qi - lak. There is the sky. There is the sky.

mp *mf*

T. Qi - lak. There is the sky. There is the sky.

mf *mf*

B. - - lak. There is the sky. There is the sky.

rehearsal only

2 7

S1 *mp* * Qi - lak. Qi lak, Qi- lak.

S2 *mp* Qi - - lak. Qi lak, Qi- lak.

A. *mp* * melody Qi - lak. Qi - - lak.

T. *p* Ah...

B. *p* Ah...

* subtle accents
NB: balance pedal parts throughout

12 *mf* *2nd time to coda*

S1 Tun - gun - iq, tun iq, tun - gun - iq. A - ya -

S2 *mf* Tun - gun - iq, i - gun - iq, tun - gun - iq. A - ya -

A. *mf* Tun - gun - iq, tun - gun - iq. A - ya -

T. Ah... *mp*

B. Ah... *mp*

(ah...) Ah...

S1 *mp*
ya. A - ya - ya.

S2 *mp*
ya. A - ya - ya.

A. *mf* *mp*
- ya. Qi - lak. Ah

T. *mf*
(ah...) O - lak.

B. *mf*
(ah...) Ji - lak.

S1 *mp* *mf*
Qi - - - lak.

S2 *mp* *mf*
Qi - - - lak.

A. *mp* *mf*
Qi - - - lak.

T. *mp* *mf*
- lak. Qi - - - lak.

B. *mp* *mf*
Qi - - - lak. Qi - - - lak.

PERUSAL SCORE ONLY - PLEASE DO NOT COPY

ᑭᑭᑭ/Qilak

Inspired by travels in Baffin Island in 2009 and a collaboration with Iqaluit folksinger and songwriter Madeleine Allakariallak, Qilak was composed as part of a concert project for Winnipeg-based *Camerata Nova* entitled *Medieval Inuit: Stories of the North*. The theme of the concert explored the early contact between Scandinavian explorers and the Inuit 1000 years ago. Balfour tells us: “Qilak is about the northern sky which is so breathtaking up in the Arctic. I loved the open space, the Inuit’s relationship with the land, and the musical sound of Inuktitut.”

The aesthetic of the piece reflects the expanse of sky and the shimmering reflection on snow. Balfour’s composition hints at influences of Inuit throat singing and hauntingly echoes the vocal style of traditional Ayaya songs of Southern Baffin Island. No melodies have been borrowed in the composition of this piece, it is entirely original.

Text in Inuktitut South Qikiqaaluk dialect

ᑭᑭᑭ/qilak the sky, the heavens, paradise

ᑭ qi “q” is an unreleased voiceless uvular stop similar to the English q, but with the tongue tip right k further back in the mouth

ᑭ la

ᑭ k “k” is an unreleased velar voiceless stop similar to the English k

ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ/tunguniq Reflection of open water and sky at the horizon. Dark blue-black or purplish fog used to give direction in early spring. The rising of clouds above sea water indicate the direction of the floe edge and provides a spatial reference when traveling across the flat tundra. The floe edge is the magical border between the sea ice and the open ocean where birds and mammals gather.

ᑭ tu “t” is an unaspirated stop similar to the English t

ᑭ ngu

ᑭ ni towards a shore in this context

ᑭᑭ q

The back of the mouth is used more in Inuktitut. Three basic vowel sounds are [i] [a] and [u]. These shift depending on surrounding consonants. Do your best to realize the language as you sing, and seek out those who can help you more or consult online resources featuring native speakers. Listen to the recording of the author, Fred Ford, on Cypresschoral.com or visit tusaalanga.ca to hear pronunciation of syllables and learn about Inuktitut. Inuktitut, is the term selected by the Government of Nunavut to represent all Inuit dialects spoken in Nunavut, including Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut.

Ayaya (alternatively spelled with a “j”) Reference to a traditional Inuit drum dance song, formally known as *pisit* (personal song), and learned by ear. Many are meant to account and remember events, but can also be healing songs or sacred songs. They tell a story through their composition and can be self-deprecating, or refer to personal successes or rivalries. The vocable “ayaya” (or combinations of these syllables) is repeated throughout the structure of drum dance songs throughout Canada, as well as Greenland and Alaska.

[Please visit Cypresschoral.com to hear the text spoken by Fred Ford and for a recording of the piece.](http://Cypresschoral.com)